

CONFERENCE OF THE EIGHTEEN-NATION COMMITTEE
ON DISARMAMENT

ENDC/PV.253
31 March 1966
ENGLISH

FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY-THIRD MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 31 March 1966, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. H. KHALLAF

(United Arab Republic)

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Mr. G. de CARVALHO SILOS
Mr. D. SILVEIRA da MOTA

Bulgaria:

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Mr. B. KONSTANTINOV
Mr. D. POPOV
Mr. D. KOSTOV

Burma:

U MAUNG MAUNG GYI

Canada:

Mr. E. L. M. BURNS
Mr. C. J. MARSHALL
Mr. P. D. LEE

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. T. LAHODA
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Mr. A. ZELLEKE

India:

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Miss E. J. M. RICHARDSON
Mr. M. J. F. DUNCAN

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Mr. C. H. TIMBERLAKE
Mr. L. D. WEILER
Mr. D. S. MACDONALD

Special Representative of the
Secretary-General:

Mr. D. PROTITCH

Deputy Special Representative
of the Secretary-General:

Mr. W. EPSTEIN

The CHAIRMAN (United Arab Republic) (translation from French): I declare open the two hundred and fifty-third plenary meeting of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament.

Mr. LAHODA (Czechoslovakia): Today I wish to make a few comments on the discussion on non-proliferation which has been taking place in the Committee. The Committee has been presented with two drafts (ENDC/152 and Add.1; ENDC/164), and it has been basically agreed to consider them article by article. Such a procedure makes it possible to carry out concrete comparisons and a matter-of-fact analysis, and enables us to assess the advantages and shortcomings of each of the drafts.

There is no doubt that first it is necessary to solve the main problems and to delimit the scope of the undertakings contained in the basic provisions of both drafts: articles I and II. The delegations of the socialist countries and of the non-aligned States have already chosen this constructive approach. However, not all the Western delegations have so far done so. They have rather directed their efforts to defending their one-sided, limited concept, which in substance amounts to attempting to adjust non-proliferation to the current internal problems of the Atlantic alliance. This concept would lead us to a situation in which the non-proliferation treaty would be subordinated to the political and strategic interests of the NATO command, and particularly to the demands of the Federal Republic of Germany, which is striving to gain access to nuclear weapons. This is fully reflected in the United States draft.

The delegations of the socialist countries and of some of the non-aligned States have already expressed their reservations of principle to the United States draft, especially to the wording of articles I and II, which provide for undertakings by nuclear weapon States on the one hand and by non-nuclear weapon States on the other. At the same time, the socialist delegations have pointed out a number of facts explaining why they do not regard the United States draft as an acceptable basis for negotiations that could bring about an agreement on consistent and effective measures to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons.

On 22 March (ENDC/PV.250) the delegation of the United States submitted amendments (ENDC/152/Add.1) to its draft treaty. Having thoroughly studied those amendments we regret to state, with full responsibility, that they contain no basic changes as compared with the original draft. They continue to try to limit non-proliferation to the transfer of nuclear weapons into the national control of States not now possessing these. The first version of the United States draft (ENDC/152) already contained provisions in this respect. What appears to be new is only the supplement providing

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for prohibition of the transfer of nuclear weapons into the control of associations of non-nuclear weapon States. When we study the formulation more closely, however, we realize that it only elaborates the previously-criticized concept and does not in the least affect the substance of that concept.

Furthermore, the amended form does not eliminate the basic shortcoming of the United States draft: the possibility of the indirect spread of nuclear weapons within Western military alignments, among whose members are both nuclear weapon and non-nuclear weapon States. Such a spread is not hypothetical; it is a reality. It represents a current extreme danger. NATO is discussing systematically and with intensity projects that, under the modest heading of shared participation motivated by the equality, sovereignty and dignity of individual members, are designed to facilitate the gaining of access to nuclear weapons by non-nuclear weapon States. More than enough has been said here on this topic by various representatives of States members of NATO, about the intention to have the members of this alliance not so far possessing nuclear weapons share in the costs connected with nuclear weapons, in the responsibility for their use, and finally in nuclear weapons themselves. The plan is for armed units of these States to make up part of the joint armed forces of NATO equipped with nuclear weapons. The Czechoslovak delegation pointed to the inconsistency between such plans and a non-proliferation treaty on 3 March (ENDC/PV.245, pp.47 et seq.).

This serious defect in the United States draft is coupled with another negative feature: that both in its original version and in its amended form the draft provides that any of the now existing nuclear weapon States might in future be replaced by an association of States which would gain independent power to use nuclear weapons. The inadmissibility of such a possibility has been pointed out by a number of delegations. For instance, on 3 March the representative of the United Arab Republic said:

"... by accepting this text we should be leaving the door open to a latent form of dissemination, a kind of future loop-hole which might perpetuate dissemination. In other words, under cover of preventing dissemination today we should really be paving the way for future dissemination by a certain category of countries and continents." (ENDC/PV.245, p.8)

The United States amendments do not pay any regard to this argument and do not eliminate the shortcoming I have just mentioned. In some aspects they even make it worse and, so to speak, underline it by creating a new category: an "association of non-nuclear weapon States" (ENDC/152, Add.1, art.I,1). The implications of establishing

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such a category fully confirm the correctness of the attitude of the socialist countries towards the concept of the delegations of the Western Powers on the question of non-proliferation.

It follows from the text of the United States draft and from the amendments recently submitted that the non-proliferation treaty would in fact not cover alignments associating nuclear with non-nuclear weapon States. After all, this has been admitted in different contexts, and also in statements by representatives of countries members of NATO. The amended article I of the United States draft treaty reads:

"Each of the nuclear weapon States party to this treaty undertakes:

"1. Not to transfer nuclear weapons into the national control of any non-nuclear weapon State, or into the control of any association of non-nuclear weapon States ..." (ibid.)

Accordingly, the prohibition of the transfer of nuclear weapons has been narrowed to non-nuclear weapon States and associations of non-nuclear weapon States. However, what is the situation in the case of associations of both non-nuclear weapon and nuclear weapon States? It is evident from the wording of the amendments that the transfer of nuclear weapons within the framework of such associations would not be prohibited. This follows from the explanation given by Mr. Foster (ENDC/PV.224, pp.16 et seq.) when he introduced the original draft treaty, and also from his statement (ENDC/PV.250) when he introduced the amendments.

Mr. Foster said, inter alia, at our meeting on 31 August 1965:

"We would not want to preclude for all time any new collective political and defence entity which might, with great effort and patience, be created over an extended period in Western Europe. We would not want to preclude such an entity from possessing and controlling nuclear weapons if it should in fact develop the capability to assume the nuclear defence responsibilities of its formerly separate national components some of which are now nuclear Powers. Such a development could indeed reduce the number of nuclear power centres". (ENDC/PV.228, p.39)

The amendments submitted last week do not introduce anything new in this respect. The statement made by Mr. Fisher on 22 March attested to this; he said in this connexion:

"This provision would bar any transfer of control of nuclear weapons to any association of States -- that is, it would prohibit the granting to any such association of the right or ability to fire a nuclear weapon

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without the explicit concurrent decision of a nuclear weapon State -- unless one of the members of the association was a nuclear weapon State and that member gave up its entire nuclear arsenal to the association. Since this would not involve any increase in the number of nuclear weapon Powers, no proliferation would result." (ENDC/PV.250, p.10)

This means that specifically in this case -- that is, within the framework of an association of nuclear weapon and non-nuclear weapon States -- the United States draft allows for the transfer of nuclear weapons into the possession and control of States which had not possessed them until that time.

Aware of the substantial loop-hole in the concept of the United States draft, the representatives of the countries members of NATO try to calm us down by asserting that the formation of such an association is a rather hypothetical, and in any case a very remote, probability. Such an argument is not convincing and cannot be relied on in working out a draft non-proliferation treaty -- especially when we know the view of high-ranking officials of the Federal Republic of Germany on the possibility of the formation of an association of this kind.

To refresh the memory of the members of the Committee, I should like to quote a passage from an article written by Dr. Heinrich Krone, Minister of the German Federal Government, and published in the "Bulletin des Presse-und Informationsantes der Bundesregierung" on 15 January 1966. This article, which the Czechoslovak delegation has referred to in one of its preceding statements (ENDC/PV.242, p.33), says, inter alia:

"Moreover, we must take care that a possible international agreement of this kind" -- that is, a non-proliferation treaty -- "does not block the way to a European nuclear force. I know that today many consider this idea utopian because at present the prospects of political unity in Europe do not appear favourable. But we are not concerned here with the policy of the next two years, but with schemes for a much longer period. What today is still regarded as utopian can very well become a possibility again in a few years' time."

It is an indisputable fact that the provisions of the United States draft treaty on non-proliferation, which allow for the transfer of nuclear weapons into the ownership and control of non-nuclear weapon States through a military alliance, represent a serious loop-hole and do not meet the requirements rightly set out in resolution 2028 (XX), (ENDC/161) adopted by the twentieth session of the United Nations General Assembly, in connexion with a non-proliferation treaty.

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In this context it is possible to point out other no less serious shortcomings in the United States draft, even in its amended form. An important aspect of measures to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons is the demand for the prohibition of any assistance in their manufacture, or in preparations for such manufacture, including the necessary testing. The amended article I, paragraph 2 of the United States draft, however, unequivocally provides that nuclear weapon States parties to the treaty undertake -

"Not to provide to any non-nuclear weapon State or association of of such States to -

"(a) assistance in the manufacture of nuclear weapons, in preparations for such manufacture, or in the testing of nuclear weapons;" (ENDC/152/Add.1) This provision may be understood as purposely making the treaty not applicable to associations of States existing at present, or to be created in future, of which nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear weapon States are, or would be, members.

However, even if the amendments did not include the above provision, which necessarily leads to the interpretation I have indicated, it is clear that the United States draft would not stand in the way of the provision of assistance in the manufacture of nuclear weapons, or in the preparations for such manufacture, to non-nuclear weapon States within their alliances with nuclear weapon States; this is, moreover, proved by the concept of "control" as defined in the amended article IV, sub-paragraph (c). This sub-paragraph says:

"'Control' means right or ability to fire nuclear weapons without the concurrent decision of an existing nuclear weapon State." (ibid.)

Only the transfer of such "control" would, according to the United States draft, be prohibited. That means that all other actions relating to nuclear weapons and their transfer to non-nuclear weapon States within the framework of the existing military alignments would be allowed. The arming with nuclear weapons of the units of these groupings, among whose members are non-nuclear weapon States, would not be prohibited. There would be no prohibition of the physical access of their members to nuclear weapons -- access which includes the possibility of gaining full information on nuclear weapons.

This would be of great help to non-nuclear weapon States members of such associations in the manufacture of nuclear weapons or in preparations for such manufacture. In respect of these States, one of the significant aspects of the Moscow Treaty (ENDC/100/Rev.1): that its conclusion makes it substantially difficult for non-nuclear weapon States to manufacture nuclear weapons without previous testing,

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would thus be annulled. Such knowledge of nuclear weapons would be of great help in starting or preparing for the manufacture of nuclear weapons which the States in question might undertake without previous experimental explosions.

Those are just a few facts in support of our conclusion that the United States draft treaty, in its original or its amended form, does not meet the requirements for a non-proliferation treaty set forth in General Assembly resolution 2028 (XX). The resolution unequivocally provides that -

"The treaty should be void of any loop-holes which might permit nuclear or non-nuclear Powers to proliferate, directly or indirectly, nuclear weapons in any form". (ENDC/161)

These facts prove again that the United States draft cannot become a suitable, acceptable basis for the Committee's discussions on a draft non-proliferation treaty.

In this situation the positive features of the Soviet draft (ENDC/164) become even more evident. The Soviet draft leaves no loop-holes: it provides no possibilities for circumventing the prohibition of the spread of nuclear weapons, either at present or in the future. It is dependable because it renders impossible proliferation in any form, directly or indirectly. We are convinced that this draft may become also a suitable, reliable starting-point and a clear guideline in working out a draft treaty that would fully meet the requirements formulated in General Assembly resolution 2028 (XX). I should like to point out that the Soviet delegation, as far as discussions on its draft are concerned, maintains a highly flexible position. Evidence of this is to be found in, for example, the statement made by Mr. Tsarapkin at our meeting on 3 March. He said:

"The Soviet delegation would like to stress that we are prepared to consider any amendments or additions to our draft treaty and to show the utmost flexibility and a constructive spirit in this regard. At the same time, however, one condition must be observed: namely, that it is essential in the interests of our common cause that amendments and additions, if any, should be directed towards the sole purpose of preparing a treaty on non-proliferation which would close all loop-holes for proliferation of nuclear weapons, in accordance with the requirements of resolution 2028 (XX) of the United Nations General Assembly."

(ENDC/PV.245, p.45)

We expect that in this spirit the Western delegations will proceed to a discussion of principles based on an objective and concrete evaluation of the two drafts which have been submitted. This requires that they should express their position on the merits and substance of the Soviet draft, and particularly on its articles I and II. So far -- at least as regards the Western delegations -- it seems

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to us that there are no reasons for the Soviet Union to submit amendments to its original draft treaty, since the Western delegations have not yet stated their views on any of its basic articles, and especially articles I and II.

Mr. FISHER (United States of America): I have studied carefully the statement made by the representative of the Soviet Union at our meeting on 29 March (ENDC/PV.252). This morning I should like to respond to certain statements and arguments put forward by Mr. Roshchin which, it seems to me, do not properly evaluate the realities of the present situation and the possibilities that lie in the future.

One of the most interesting statements made by Mr. Roshchin related to paragraph 3 of our article I as amended. This paragraph, as the Committee knows, prohibits a nuclear weapon State from taking action "which would cause an increase in the total number of States and associations of States having control of nuclear weapons." (ENDC/152/Add.1) Mr. Roshchin commented that a State and an association of States are not the same thing. One might not find too much cause to quarrel with that. However, he went on to say that if, instead of five nuclear weapon States, there should in future be four nuclear weapon States plus one nuclear association comprised of perhaps fifteen States, then there would be nineteen States "having access, to a greater or lesser extent, to nuclear weapons" (ENDC/PV.252,p.6). This, according to Mr. Roshchin, would be nuclear proliferation.

With the greatest respect, I would say that this argument will not stand close scrutiny. The term "having access, to a greater or lesser extent, to nuclear weapons" which the Soviet representative has used, is an interesting one but does not hit directly at the problem that we are trying to deal with: the prevention of any increase in the number of Powers that will be in a position to unleash nuclear weapons.

There are two ways in which a non-nuclear weapon State could obtain this power. One way would be by manufacturing nuclear weapons itself. Here the statement of the Soviet representative suggests the image of a non-nuclear weapon State so manipulating an alliance arrangement that that State acquires an increasing amount of secret information, until, finally, it is able to obtain national control of nuclear weapons by manufacturing its own. These statements overlook the clear prohibition of article I paragraph 2 and article II paragraph 2 of the United States draft as we have recently amended those paragraphs. They also overlook one central fact: what today prevents a number of advanced countries from acquiring nuclear weapons is not technical backwardness; it is rather their wise political judgment that to acquire nuclear

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weapons would help neither their own national security nor world peace. We are here to confirm this series of national judgements -- to reinforce and perpetuate those judgements -- in a general and, we would hope, universal treaty.

The other way in which a non-nuclear weapon State could obtain the power to unleash nuclear weapons would be by obtaining from an existing nuclear weapon State the right or ability to use these weapons on its own. In this respect Mr. Roshchin seemed to be concerned that what he referred to as "association" with nuclear weapons could permit a non-nuclear weapon State to obtain this right or ability. Here Soviet statements suggest the image of a non-nuclear weapon State becoming such a dominant figure in an alliance with a nuclear weapon State that the non-nuclear weapon State could make a decision, on its own, to fire nuclear weapons.

In considering the types of associations which a nuclear weapon State might have with a non-nuclear weapon State, we should first deal with what is the most immediate possibility -- that is, an association in which the nuclear weapon State retains a veto over the use of its nuclear weapons. I have already read out to this Conference (ENDC/PV.245, pp.26, 27, 32; ENDC/PV.250, p.6) statements of the Secretaries of State and Defense of the United States dealing with the intention of the United States with respect to common nuclear defence arrangements within alliance structures. Both of them made it quite clear that none of the plans now under contemplation involved the giving up by the United States of a veto over the use of United States weapons. Therefore no question of the transfer of control even arises.

At our last meeting the representative of the Soviet Union indicated that he did not consider the retention of a United States veto convincing. He stated that the Soviet Union could not base its security upon a United States veto when the question of firing nuclear weapons is considered (ENDC/PV.252, p. 9). He went on to state that on the question of exercising the veto in NATO the United States would be guided by its own interests and not by the interests of other States, the Soviet Union and its allies, or the interests of the non-aligned States (ibid., pp.9.10).

Again with the greatest respect, I submit that this observation misses the point. It does so because it fails to recognize the true situation in the world in which we are living and in which we shall continue to live until we achieve general and complete

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disarmament under effective international control. For until that result is achieved the Soviet Union will of necessity be relying on a United States decision, whether it be called a veto or by some other name, to use self-restraint, judgement and wisdom concerning the awesome power of the nuclear weapons that are at the disposal of the United States.

But in this regard the situations of the United States and the Soviet Union are truly reciprocal. We in the United States depend for our security upon the self-restraint and judgement of the Soviet Union in any decisions which it might make with regard to its nuclear arsenal. The events of the past years have shown that both these States are capable of exercising self-restraint, judgement and wisdom. Hence, to say that one cannot rely upon the United States veto is in effect to ignore the present world. That is something we cannot do if we are to succeed in our negotiations.

We must, of course, also deal with the situation where an association of States is formed in which the nuclear weapon State might not retain a veto. As I stated here on 22 March (ENDC/PV.250, p.10), our new article I paragraph 3 would permit the transfer of control of nuclear weapons to any such association of States only if one of the members of the association was a nuclear weapon State and that member State gave up its entire arsenal of nuclear weapons to the association. Since this would not involve any increase in the number of nuclear weapon Powers, no proliferation would result.

The welding of all a nuclear weapon State's nuclear forces into a collective unit could take place only in the event of a very profound change in the political relationships existing between States. The fact that the nuclear weapon State would have to give up control over its entire arsenal of nuclear weapons provides assurances that there would be no sham arrangements and no loop-holes. And there would be no proliferation either; because if such a profound political change were to occur, the centres of nuclear power -- those centres with the awesome responsibility of making the decision on nuclear war -- would not be increased, not even by one. I might add that a nuclear weapon Power would be quite unlikely to place all its nuclear forces into a collective unit if the result would be the domination of that unit by another member.

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A large part of the misery and destruction of war that has occurred during modern history has been caused by the divisions and conflicts among the States of Europe. In the light of this fact, can we at this table say that the effort to bring Europe together, to work towards greater unity, to create common institutions that will preclude division, should be hampered by our lack of foresight in drafting this treaty? Let us rather draft a treaty that prevents proliferation and does not pretend that the world may not ever change, even for the better.

At this stage in my remarks I should like to comment on one observation made by Mr. Roshchin at our last meeting. Mr. Roshchin implied that somehow the United States text had omitted any reference to prohibition on transfer of control over nuclear weapons or to other prohibitions on transfer to armed forces or individual military personnel of non-nuclear weapon States, even though they are under the supreme command of a military alliance (ENDC/PV.252, p. 8). Article I paragraph 4 of the United States draft treaty as amended is quite explicit on this point. It obligates the nuclear weapon States party to the treaty -

"Not to take any of the actions prohibited in the preceding paragraphs of this article directly, or indirectly through third States or associations of States, or through units of the armed forces or military personnel of any State, even if such units or personnel are under the command of a military alliance".

(ENDC/152/Add.1)

Article II paragraph 4 of the United States draft treaty as amended contains a similar obligation for non-nuclear weapon States party to the agreement. Surely nothing could be more explicit on this particular point than these two paragraphs. Obviously there are still differences between us on the nature of the prohibitions to be placed in the treaty; but there does not seem to be any real difference on the proposition that the prohibitions that we finally agree upon shall not be evaded because units or personnel are under the command of a military alliance.

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We can negotiate a non-proliferation treaty which will last only if we recognize the political realities which exist in the world in which we are living. One reality which we must recognize is the fact that defensive alliances exist. A treaty which ignores this fact may well prove worthless. A treaty which recognizes this fact but ensures that relationships within an alliance do not change in a way involving the proliferation of nuclear weapons will serve us all.

An alliance, by its very nature, is an agreement to join together for the common defence. When a defensive alliance includes both nuclear weapon States and non-nuclear weapon States, certain decisions must be taken jointly if the alliance is to exist with any vitality. This is the case in NATO where, in particular, geographic considerations require that nuclear weapons be present on the territory of non-nuclear weapon States which are members of the alliance.

It would appear that the members of the Warsaw Pact also recognize that the sharing of military decision-making within that Pact -- certainly as to "cardinal questions of the defence of these countries" -- is an appropriate function of an alliance. That, at least, seems to be the import of the quotation from the Soviet newspaper Red Star which Lord Chalfont read to us on 22 March (ENDC/PV.250, p.18) and which I have just repeated. Certainly, questions of the use of nuclear weapons in the defence of the Warsaw Pact countries are "cardinal questions". I think we are entitled to ask: do the Soviet Union and the other members of the Warsaw Pact consider the sharing of military decision-making on these questions as constituting proliferation?

An obvious example of necessary common arrangements can be found in those required for the defence of allied territory and armed forces against air attack. If those arrangements include the stationing of nuclear-capable surface-to-air missiles on the territory of a non-nuclear weapon member of the alliance, surely that State should have a voice in the emplacement of those weapons. There must be, in fact, a measure of consultation in any military alliance of sovereign States on the overall strategy or plan of use of all the integrated forces available to the alliance, whether for air defence or other purposes. This consultation must above all seek to achieve an understanding as to the circumstances in which the most devastating of all weapons -- that is, nuclear weapons -- could be used.

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Further, the Soviet Union would apparently prohibit giving non-nuclear weapon States any information which could be employed for the use of nuclear weapons. This would prevent even training the armed forces of non-nuclear weapon States which are members of alliances in the tactical employment of nuclear weapons, or even in defence against them, and thus would make it impossible for members of an alliance to operate effectively as a team in their defence. This prohibition on the transfer of information which could be employed for these purposes would therefore constitute direct interference in the activity or internal affairs of military alliances, which as the Czechoslovak representative remarked at our meeting on 22 February last, is not the aim of a non-proliferation treaty (ENDC/PV.242, p.31).

In regard to all the remarks I have made about NATO arrangements, I should like to emphasize, as I have done several times in my explanation of the United States amendments, that the employment of United States nuclear weapons by a member of NATO is subject to veto by the United States. In this context also I should like to observe that, from the presence in the armed forces of certain European countries members of the Warsaw Pact of Soviet-built delivery vehicles capable of using nuclear warheads, it seems apparent that the Soviet Union also trains its allies in the use of delivery vehicles capable of using nuclear weapons. I ask again, with the greatest respect: do the Soviet Union and the other members of the Warsaw Pact consider that the practice in this regard constitutes proliferation?

The difficulties in the Soviet approach which we have discussed today are reason enough why we should get away from vague concepts of "association with nuclear weapons", or being "more or less associated with nuclear weapons", or "access to nuclear weapons". Our primary effort must be to concentrate on preventing any increase -- even by one -- in the number of power centres that can start a nuclear war. We must not lose sight of that objective. I submit that the United States draft treaty, as amended, would achieve that objective.

Earlier in my statement today I dealt with some of the provisions of our draft treaty. I should now like to refer specifically to the clearly-defined prohibition of transfer contr of nuclear weapons contained in article I paragraph 1 and article II paragraph 1. Secondly, I should like to refer to the prohibitions concerning manufacture and testing

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of nuclear weapons contained in article I paragraph 2 and also in article II paragraphs 1 and 2. Finally, I should like to refer to the clear definition of control contained in article IV, subparagraph (c).

The preoccupation of the Soviet representative with the arrangements within NATO appears to be based on the concern that we are doing, or thinking of doing, things in Europe which will somehow lead to proliferation. Those concerns are quite unfounded. That they are unfounded is shown by the firm provisions in the treaty which we are now proposing. If those unfounded concerns should, in the end, prevent this Conference from arriving at a world-wide non-proliferation agreement, then the Soviet Union might have created the very danger we all seek to avert and about which it has expressed the most concern.

The real and immediate threat of nuclear proliferation is not within the existing alliance structures. It is not within Europe. No one really believes that the dam which is now holding back proliferation will break in Europe. The greatest risk of a break in the dam which holds back the proliferation of nuclear weapons is that in the absence of a general non-proliferation treaty -- or, even worse, in the event of a breakdown of our efforts to obtain such a treaty -- one or another nation may make the independent decision to become a nuclear weapon State by manufacturing its own weapons. That is a risk which is constantly increasing as nation after nation acquires both plutonium and nuclear know-how through the construction and operation of power-producing reactors. If the dam breaks this way, by this decision, we shall have great difficulty in preventing the flood from reaching Europe; we shall have great difficulty in preventing the flood from reaching many regions of the world. I urge members of this Committee -- particularly the Soviet representative -- to view the problem which faces us in that perspective.

I submit that in our work here we must recognize the world as it is. I urge that all in this Committee reflect upon the question of how we can build upon reality to reach an agreement. We are not here to engage in debate; we are here to negotiate a mutually-acceptable treaty. With the greatest respect, I ask the Soviet representative and the other representatives at this Conference to consider my remarks today with this end in view.

The CHAIRMAN (United Arab Republic) (translation from French):

I have received the following proposal from the two co-Chairmen regarding the organization of our work at the next two meetings:

(spoke in English):

"The co-Chairmen wish to propose to the Committee that the next two meetings, the 254th and 255th, should be devoted to the question of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in case there are representatives who wish to address the Committee on that subject. If time remains after statements on the subject of non-proliferation have been concluded, then other collateral measures may be discussed.

"This proposal is not intended to preclude the recognized right of any delegation to raise and discuss any subject in any plenary meeting of the Committee."

If I hear no objection, I shall regard that proposal as adopted.

It was so decided.

The Conference decided to issue the following communiqué:

"The Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament today held its 253rd plenary meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the chairmanship of H. E. Ambassador Hussein Khallaf, representative of the United Arab Republic.

"Statements were made by the representatives of Czechoslovakia and the United States.

"The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Monday, 4 April 1966 at 10.30 a.m."

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.

